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6 RACE AND JOB SATISFACTION IN THE U.S. ARMY.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Department of Sociology

RACE AND JOB SATISFACTION IN THE U.S. ARMY<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

The nature of racial differences or similarities in job satisfaction within a military context is an enduring research and policy issue. Studies of the American Soldier during World War II found patterns of service-related attitudes among black soldiers that anticipated contemporary concerns. Black soldiers, on the average, expressed a greater sense of pride in their units, a greater sense of importance of their Army jobs, and more interest in their Army jobs, than did white soldiers. Black soldiers were also more likely than whites to feel that their Army training would help them get better civilian jobs. However, in terms of their physical condition and general well-being, black soldiers during World War II gave more negative responses than did white soldiers. Regarding all of these variables as indicators of job satisfaction, Stouffer and his colleagues concluded that 'there is no evidence that Negroes' general level of job satisfaction was higher than that of whites.... No conclusion can safely be drawn as to the comparative general level of job satisfaction, although there would seem to be little doubt that the Negro was somewhat more prone to regard his job as important and interesting. 2 As shall be seen below, we adopt a somewhat more narrow definition of job satisfaction. Excluding Stouffer's concerns with physical well-being and general feelings of happiness, we feel his data show that, in terms of the variables we regard as components of job satisfaction, black soldiers during World War II were, on the average, more satisfied than white soldiers. They were also, however, more likely than whites to feel that they had not gotten a square deal from the Army, and to attribute this feeling to racial



discrimination. Whites, on the other hand, were likely to complain in terms of "politics or favoritism" rather than in a racial frame of reference. It is important to recall that the American Army in World War II was racially segregated, that blacks were restricted in the military roles open to them, and that promotion opportunities for blacks were severely constrained. Stouffer and his colleagues suggested that the generally positive levels of satisfaction reported by blacks were due to these soldiers' comparisons of their treatment within the military with what they had experienced in civilian life.

Recent research has echoed these themes. In particular, research conducted for the Army in the early 1970s showed that blacks felt that they were discriminated against in the Army, but that conditions were improving, and that there was more discrimination in the civilian sector than there was in the Army.<sup>3</sup>

With the abolition of conscription and the requirement for procuring and retaining quality personnel in the 1970s, there has been an increase in policy emphasis on the "quality of work life" in the Army, including a concern with job satisfaction among enlisted personnel. Recent social indicator analyses have looked at job satisfaction and the changing American soldier. These studies have shown an overall decline in job satisfaction from the Army of World War II to the All-Volunteer Force, as well as a lower level of satisfaction among military personnel than among civilians.<sup>4</sup> However, they also show great similarities in the structure of work-related attitudes between the 1940s and the 1970s.<sup>5</sup> This latter finding reflects the stability in the way soldiers have looked at and evaluated their work roles even though they have become more



negative in that evaluation.

Here we will not directly compare today's soldier with those of World War II on specific indicators, but we will be concerned with the overall pattern of higher job satisfaction among blacks than among whites. Also, we will address perceptions of racial discrimination among blacks and perceptions of unfairness among whites as orientations underpinning dissatisfaction. Thus, we will take the basic American soldier findings as our starting point and will systematically evaluate the differences and similarities in the work-related attitudes of black and white soldiers under contemporary all-volunteer conditions.

Given the substantial increase in the proportion of blacks in the All-Voluntary Army, particularly in the enlisted ranks, concern with racial differences in satisfaction would be heightened if blacks were systematically more dissatisfied than whites with their jobs in the Army. In 1964, prior to the Vietnam War build-up, blacks made up 12% of the enlisted force, a figure that was relatively stable through the height of the Vietnam War in 1968. During the transition to the All-Volunteer Force in 1973, 18% were black and that proportion has risen ever since (e.g., 1974: 21%; 1975: 23%; 1976: 24%; 1977: 26%). During this period, roughly 9 percent of the males eligible for military service were black. Given the increasing black composition of the Army's enlisted grades, if blacks were systematically more positive in their evaluations of Army work roles than whites, there would be an increase in aggregate perceptions of quality of Army work life.

#### RACE AND MILITARY JOB SATISFACTION

In the most comprehensive study to date, Wilson and Butler have found no overall differences between blacks and whites in job satisfaction.<sup>6</sup> Still they have argued that there are, in fact, clear racial differences (with blacks less satisfied than whites), but that those differences are statistically suppressed. Such a finding would be consistent with Kalleberg's work showing black civilians to be more negative in their perceptions of job rewards than whites.<sup>7</sup>

Wilson and Butler have gone on to suggest that blacks approach the work setting differently than whites. Indeed, a study of Naval personnel has shown black recruits to be more concerned than white recruits with a steady job which offers good pay, benefits and status.<sup>8</sup> Although Wilson and Butler, looking at a combined sample of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, found no zero-order racial differences in job satisfaction, some other recent research has replicated the World War II finding that blacks have not lower but somewhat higher levels of satisfaction than white soldiers - at least with some aspects of the job.<sup>9</sup>

Because of the intense racial discrimination in American society, black soldiers of the World War II era appeared to view the military as fairer than civilian society and expected to find greater potential for self advancement in the military. The disproportionately high unemployment rate for contemporary black youths suggests that many black soldiers are "economically conscripted" and may, thus, be experiencing a situation somewhat parallel to World War II.<sup>10</sup>

However, the effects of such pressure to enlist in the military could operate either to increase the positive perceptions of the military or to increase the levels of resentment for being "locked in" to a life one would rather not pursue. In fact, blacks have been shown to be more likely to indicate that they plan to serve in the military but also much more likely to indicate that is not what they want to do.<sup>11</sup> Hence it is quite possible that blacks, more than whites, are not as likely to be "true volunteers" because of the disproportionate economic pressures for military service.

In opposition to this conception of economic conscription is the reality that blacks disproportionately gain from military service, i.e., black veterans do better socio-economically than black nonveterans although there are generally no differences between white veterans and nonveterans. This difference is interpreted by researchers to be the result of a "bridging environment" which facilitates the entry of blacks who have served in the military into the white dominated civilian work world because of increased education, job skills, and bureaucratic expertise among black veterans.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, to the extent that blacks individually perceive this objective reality, the bridging environment conception would argue for more positive evaluations of the military job even among those who are staying for only a short-time, i.e., those who are not career-oriented, since military service is generally an asset in preparing them for civilian employment.

White soldiers, especially those who do not want to pursue military careers, may be more likely to perceive alternative civilian job opportunities - although unrealistically in many cases - and



therefore have come to see their military position as comparatively unsatisfactory. This would also be consistent with the World War II findings which demonstrated that those with higher job expectations were harder to satisfy.

Wilson and Butler have also warned of a separatist tendency among blacks and have suggested that a racially integrated work setting may undermine black job satisfaction. A recent report has found, indeed, a small degree of separatism among not only black recruits, but among white recruits as well.<sup>13</sup> Additional factors in the work setting, which must be considered, are black perceptions of racial discrimination and white perceptions of reverse discrimination.

In a study by Pecorella, two levels of racial discrimination were identified: discrimination felt to be directed against oneself and perceived discrimination against blacks as a group.<sup>14</sup> In other words, a black soldier may or may not personally experience discrimination against himself but, may nevertheless perceive a collectively oriented discrimination against blacks in general. We will address this basic distinction in later analyses and will try to estimate the part that perceptions of discrimination play in job satisfaction within a racially integrated environment. However, we must first consider the basic nature of job satisfaction within the military organization prior to examining racial differences or similarities.

## THE NATURE OF JOB SATISFACTION

Measurement of job satisfaction has varied greatly, but all researchers agree that the level to which one is satisfied with his job is a function of numerous factors. Most comprehensive analyses consider job satisfaction to stem from individual perceptions of pay, their peer groups, supervision, and the overall organization as well as the individual's rate of advancement, degree of opportunities, and the level of satisfaction attributed specifically to his job.<sup>15</sup>

The present paper will approach the multi-faceted nature of job satisfaction by utilizing a theoretical distinction provided by Aiken and Hage.<sup>16</sup> They consider each factor impinging upon individual feelings of satisfaction as reflecting one of two general dimensions of individual importance. First, there is the expressive relations or interpersonal dimension, within which satisfaction with one's work group and supervisor is of most relevance. In addition, there is the work dimension involving factors relevant to one's work and career development, such as the individual's rate of advancement, his potential progress, and the degree to which he is satisfied with the job itself.

The analysis of job satisfaction in a military setting which we will present here should be put in perspective by noting levels of job satisfaction among civilians. A comparison of Navy and Army personnel with civilian workers has shown that individuals basically seek the same things in a job whether in a civilian or military context.<sup>17</sup> Although individuals' work preferences are consistent across military and civilian sectors, for military personnel there seems to be a lack of fit between these preferences and their

perceptions of the actual job.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, an existing comparison of job satisfaction levels among military and civilian personnel (which we will discuss in detail below) has shown soldiers to be generally satisfied to a much lower degree.<sup>19</sup>

In this paper, we will focus on racial differences or similarities in the peacetime Army under all-volunteer conditions and will address the two dimensions of job satisfaction - interpersonal and work/career - suggested by Aiken and Hage and will examine them within the context of other aspects of the military work role including perceptions of discrimination and fair treatment.

The existing literature on race and job satisfaction in the military setting is not an unambiguous guide to what we should expect to find in the analysis to be presented. There are, however, several general theoretical and empirical threads running throughout past research which can be of some guidance.

The first is the consistent importance of career orientation as a factor separating soldiers in terms of their attitudes. We can generally expect career-oriented soldiers to be more satisfied with all aspects of the job than those who have no career commitment. Thus, the presence or absence of career orientation needs to be taken into account, and most of our analyses will be presented separately for career and noncareer soldiers. Those who are career-oriented can also be expected to be quite similar to each other as a result of a variety of homogenization processes discussed by Abrahamsson.<sup>20</sup>

These common experiences are not greatly affected by racial differences. Therefore, we would expect racial differences in satisfaction among career-oriented soldiers to be of less magnitude



than differences among soldiers who are not career-oriented.

In addition, based on (a) the World War II American Soldier findings and (b) the conception of the bridging environment, we would expect there to be racial differences among noncareer personnel, with blacks being higher in job satisfaction than whites.

Whites would be expected to react less favorably than blacks in their comparison of the military with alternatives perceived to be available in the civilian world. Additionally for blacks, the possible perceptions of military service as a bridge to those otherwise unavailable alternatives in that civilian world would lead to more positive evaluations of their military job.

Another expectation, based on earlier analyses of first-term soldiers by Blair, is that attitudes about interpersonal relations will be more positively evaluated in general than those concerning the work role and career development.<sup>21</sup>

As indicated above, past research efforts have suggested that, to the extent that there are any racial differences in overall job satisfaction in the military, blacks are more positive than whites. Our research effort here will extend those analyses (a) by conducting separate analyses for career and noncareer soldiers, (b) by refining the general job satisfaction concept into two fundamental components (interpersonal satisfaction and work/career satisfaction), and (c) by putting the job satisfaction measures into the context of other work-related attitudes. Prior to presenting the analysis, we will outline the indicators, the survey data upon which they are based, and the analysis strategies we have employed.

## METHODS

### Data Sources

The findings are based on survey questionnaires administered to a sample of 2286 Army personnel in late 1974 and early 1975 (approximately two years after the end of the draft), stratified to represent major Army entities. The questionnaire was based upon the University of Michigan's Survey of Organizations (SOO).<sup>22</sup> The data were collected by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) of the University of Michigan. For these analyses, only the sample of enlisted personnel will be analyzed since there were not enough black officers in the sample to be able to systematically compare them to white officers. In addition, the data indicate that job satisfaction is not as problematic an issue among officers as among enlisted men.<sup>23</sup> Because of the small numbers of women in the Army sample, they have not been included in the findings presented. The sample is described in greater detail in a recent monograph which reports a wide variety of findings based on that data set as well as in a detailed technical report.<sup>24</sup>

### Indicators

The survey items used to construct the indicators of our variables are presented in Table 1. The measures of interpersonal satisfaction and work and career satisfaction are components of a more general satisfaction index contained in the Survey of Organizations. The decomposition of the general index into these components was based upon the intercorrelations among the items,

Table 1. Survey Items Used in Analysis

This table displays each major measure (underlined) along with its item(s) listed by question number. The response scale for each item is indicated by its end points, and the scoring shown is that used to construct the measure. Those items marked with an "R" had to be recoded in reverse for index purposes; in such cases the response scale shown in this table is the recoded (reversed) version.

Interpersonal Satisfaction<sup>a</sup>

Each item shares the following introduction:  
These first questions are about your present job and the organization in which you presently work:  
(1=very dissatisfied; 5=very satisfied)

A10. All in all, how satisfied are you with the persons in your workgroup?

A11. All in all, how satisfied are you with your supervisor?

Work and Career Satisfaction<sup>a</sup>

Each item shares the same introduction and response selection as the Interpersonal Satisfaction Index (above).

A12. All in all, how satisfied are you with your job?

A13. All in all, how satisfied are you with this organization compared to most others?

A15. How satisfied do you feel with the progress you have made in this organization up to now?

A16. How satisfied do you feel with your chance for getting ahead in this organization in the future?

Perceived Work Group Support<sup>b</sup>

Each of the following questions share the same introduction:  
In the questions below, work group means all those persons who report directly to the same supervisor. Moreover, each question is following by:  
This is how it is now (1=to a very little extent; 5=to a very good extent).

A56. How friendly and easy to approach are the persons in your work group?

A58. When you talk with persons in your work group, to what extent do they pay attention to what you're saying?

A60. To what extent are persons in your work group willing to listen to your problems?



### Perceived Supervisor Support<sup>b</sup>

All the following questions are followed by:  
This is how it is now (1=to a very little extent; 5=to a very great extent).

- A29. How friendly and easy to approach is your supervisor?
- A31. When you talk with your supervisor, to what extent does he pay attention to what you're saying?
- A33. To what extent is your supervisor willing to listen to your problems?

### Perceived Military Job Opportunities<sup>c</sup>

All items share the following introduction:  
To what extent do you think the following opportunities are available to people who work in the military service:  
(1=very little extent; 5=very great extent).

- C1. A chance to get ahead.
  - C2. A chance to get more education.
  - C3. A chance to advance to a more responsible position.
  - C4. A chance to have a personally more fulfilling job.
  - C5. A chance to get their ideas heard.
- (One item of missing data allowed in index construction.)

### Perceived Fair Treatment in Service<sup>c</sup>

- C9R. Do you personally feel that you would receive more just and fair treatment as a civilian or as a member of the military service? (Reversed: 1=much more fair as civilian; 5=much more fair in service; 6. "question not appropriate for me" treated as missing data.)

### Discrimination Against Self<sup>d</sup>

- A114. To what extent do you feel in any way discriminated against in your job because of your race or national origin? (1=to a very little extent; 5=to a very great extent).

### Discrimination Against Blacks<sup>d</sup>

- C8. To what extent do you think there is any discrimination against black people who are in the armed services? (1=to a very little extent; 5=to a very great extent).
- a. The Interpersonal Satisfaction and Work and Career Satisfaction indices were developed for this paper and are subsets of an overall Satisfaction Index devised by Taylor and Bowers in The Survey of Organizations.
- b. These indices were developed by Taylor and Bowers in The Survey of Organizations.
- c. These indices were used previously by Bachman, Blair and Segal in The All-Volunteer Force.
- d. These indicators were used by Pecorrela in "Occupational Discrimination Against Blacks in the Army," to reflect individuals' perceptions of discrimination at the individual and collective levels.

which were consistent with the Aiken and Hage formulation.<sup>25</sup> Two additional measures of interpersonal relations, perceived work group support and perceived supervisor support are standard indexes in the Survey of Organizations.

Our multiple-item index of perceived military job opportunities, and a single item measuring perceived fair treatment in the military, were used previously in a more general analysis of attitudes in the all-volunteer Army.<sup>26</sup> The two discrimination items were used by Pecorella in her analysis of these data.<sup>27</sup>

In our analyses we have treated as career-oriented those who planned to reenlist and make the military a career, those who planned to retire, plus those who planned to reenlist or extend but were undecided about a military career. We have treated as noncareer-oriented those who planned to return to civilian life plus those who expected to reenlist or extend but did not intend to make the military a career. This breakdown by career orientation has been demonstrated in other analyses of this data set to reveal fundamental cleavages among enlisted men independent of any background characteristics of the respondents.<sup>28</sup>

### Analysis Strategy

We will first compare the basic distributions of soldiers on our major satisfaction items with civilian norms for those items. Then we will present findings for all blacks and whites on their overall evaluations of different aspects of the military work setting. We will follow that by a detailed examination of the two types of work-related values of interest to us here: those concerned with

interpersonal relations and those dealing with the work role and career development. We will then look at racial differences in each type of value, while controlling for career orientation. Next, perceptions of types of racial discrimination will be detailed in the context of looking at the racial composition of the social structure in which black and white soldiers find themselves.

The findings will be presented in "deviation scores." Elsewhere we have shown the utility of representing all measures along a single scale of positive to negative sentiment.<sup>29</sup> Given a variety of measures based on different types and numbers of items, that is, items with several different response scales, midpoints, and ranges, the use of a single overall scale of military evaluation and motivation requires that one make some arbitrary decisions. For each measure, we treat the midpoint of the range of possible scores as representing a "neutral point," a position which does not seem especially favorable or unfavorable toward the military. Using this method, we can examine the mean score for an analysis group and see whether it is to the positive side of the neutral point or the negative side. In order to scale the distances away from the neutral point in a way that provides some comparability across the various measures, we express each departure from the midpoint as a fraction of the standard deviation (SD) for the measure in question. Thus, for example, the mean score for the measure "Interpersonal Satisfaction" is 3.71 for all blacks or .71 above the neutral point of 3.00 for that measure. The standard deviation for that measure is 1.08, so .71 represents 66 percent of a standard deviation. Accordingly, we express the mean score for all blacks as .66 scale



units toward the positive end of the continuum. (In order to facilitate comparisons among groups, computations for all groups use the standard deviation for the total sample of enlisted men as the basis for computing departures from the neutral point.) These "deviation scores" are presented for all blacks and all whites in the form of graphics and will be the basis for our initial analysis of racial differences and similarities.

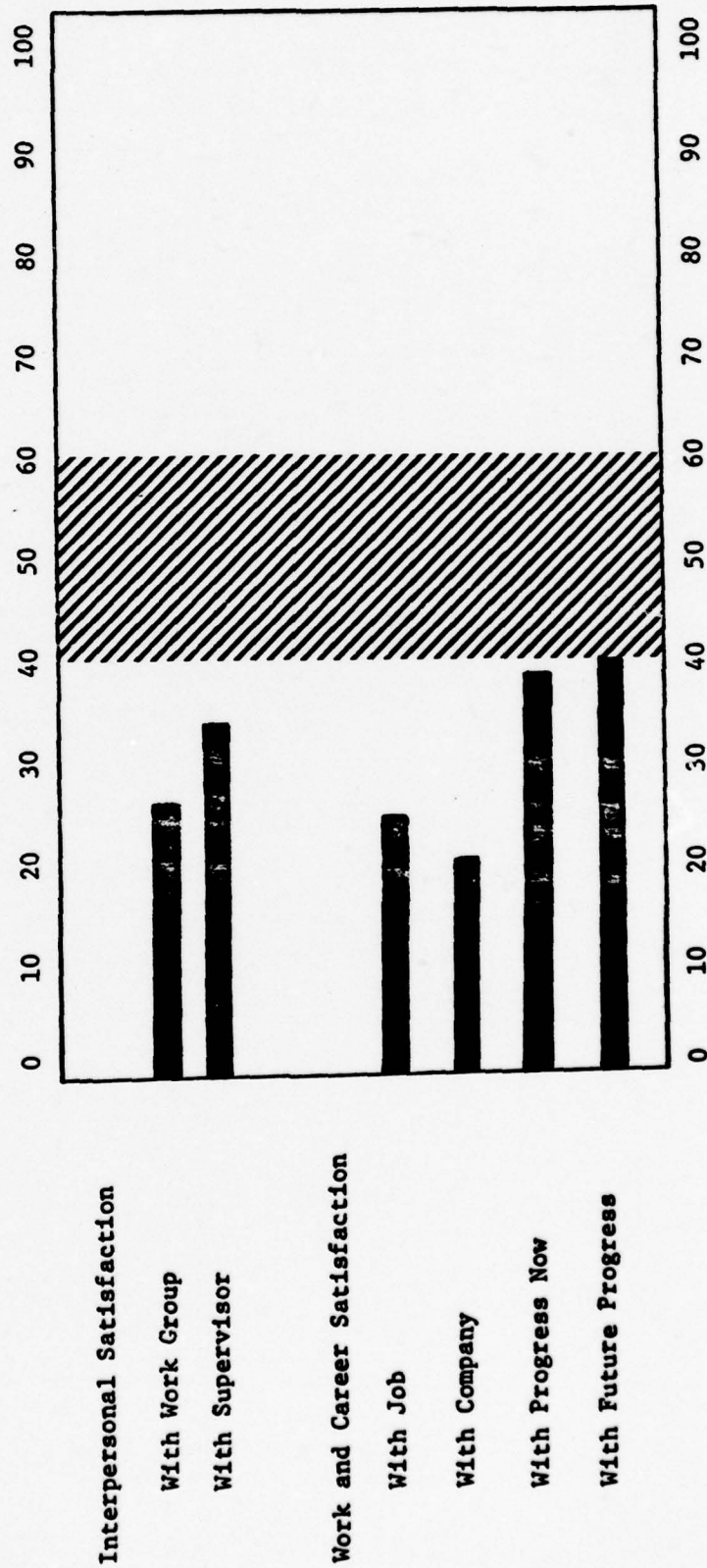
#### FINDINGS

##### Military Job Satisfaction in Civilian Perspective

The detailed findings for black and white soldiers to be presented below should be put in perspective by comparing the overall findings for our primary measures of interpersonal and work/career satisfaction among soldiers with those for civilians using the same survey instrument. The Survey of Organizations (from which the items making up our satisfaction indexes were taken) was developed by Taylor and Bowers and has been used in a variety of industrial settings.<sup>30</sup> In an early technical report examining several aspects of these data, Wessner and Franklin compared the overall findings for all soldiers in the sample with a 10% random sample of 22,000 people from 32 business organizations. In Figure 1, we have drawn upon part of their analysis and have presented the six questionnaire items dealing with satisfaction which we are using here.<sup>31</sup> The interpersonal satisfaction index we have developed includes satisfaction with the work group and with the supervisor. Our work and career development satisfaction index includes

FIGURE 1<sup>a</sup>

TOTAL ARMY - SATISFACTION ITEMS<sup>b</sup>



a. This figure is based on Figure 8, page 23 of Wessner and Franklin, The Army as a Functioning Organization.

b. Percentiles based on deciles describing a 10% random sample of 22,000 people from 32 business organizations.

satisfaction with the job, with the organization compared to others, with the individual's present progress and with expectations about future progress. The Survey of Organization's satisfaction index also included satisfaction with pay, which has not been included in either of our indexes because of its low inter-item correlations among soldiers in our sample with the items included in either index. Figure 1 presents mean percentile scores, with the shaded area representing the middle two deciles of the civilian distribution.

The Wessner and Franklin findings show that, overall, soldiers are quite dissatisfied relative to civilian employees. That is, in terms of civilian norms, soldiers are outside of the normal range on all items we are including in our analysis except for satisfaction with future progress where they are on the edge of that range (40th percentile). Of particular note is that their interpersonal satisfaction is quite low and that the individual items making up the work and career satisfaction index operate quite differently relative to civilian norms. For soldiers, satisfaction with the job and with the military organization is quite low compared to civilian norms, but satisfaction with present and future progress is much closer to the normal range.

These relative civil-military findings are important to keep in mind as we begin our own analysis of these data since we will use the technique of looking at deviation scores discussed above. These deviation scores will reflect a different perspective since they will focus on the absolute level of satisfaction with reference to the actual response categories available to the respondent. Thus, whether or not members of a particular group of soldiers are

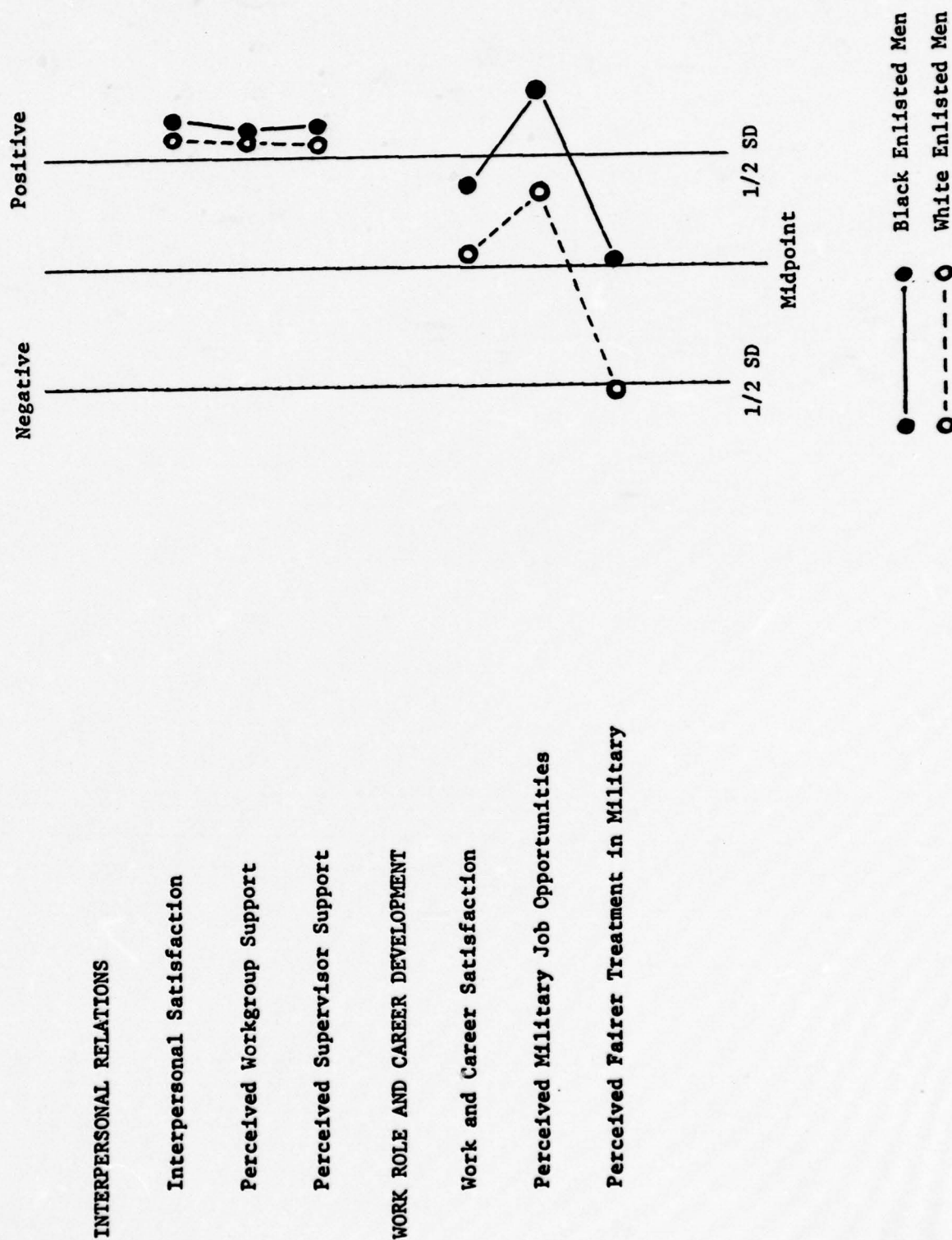


satisfied or dissatisfied can be thought of in two ways. First, one can look at whether they are satisfied with relation to the midpoint of the response scale. We will use deviation scores to examine that perspective. The second perspective is whether they are satisfied relative to civilians. The percentile analysis reported by Wessner and Franklin which we have presented here would suggest that they are not. Separate findings for black and white soldiers in percentile form were not included in their analysis and the overall findings are primarily a reflection of the larger proportion of whites in the sample. Thus, as we move into our own analysis, one should keep in mind that if blacks have more positive satisfaction scores than whites, in accordance with our expectations, they may nevertheless (from a comparative point of view) simply be less dissatisfied rather than more satisfied.

#### Race and Overall Evaluations of the Military Work Setting

In Figure 2 we have separately presented the findings for all blacks and all whites and compared the mean scores of each group with the substantive midpoint of each index by using deviation scores. As a result, Figure 2 informs us not only of racial differences or similarities, but also the extent to which blacks and whites are positive or negative. The further the mean score is to the right (or positive side) of the midpoint, the more blacks or whites are positive in their responses (or high in satisfaction). If the deviation score is near zero, it indicates that the group is generally split, and if the deviation score reveals that the mean score of the group is considerably to the left (or negative side) of

FIGURE 2  
COMPARISON OF ALL BLACK AND ALL WHITE ENLISTED MEN



the midpoint, then large numbers of the group are negative in their evaluations (or low in satisfaction).

Figure 2 shows that both blacks and whites are positive about their interpersonal relations as indicated by positive deviation scores substantially to the right of the midpoint for each group and for all three measures: their interpersonal satisfactions with co-workers and supervisors, as well as their perceptions of supportive work groups and supervisors. Indeed, their deviation scores on all three measures are very close.

The situation is more complex with regard to overall black and white evaluation of the work role and their career development. There are consistent moderate differences between blacks and whites, with blacks more positive in each comparison. Job opportunities are the most positively evaluated dimension by both groups while perceptions of fair treatment are most negatively evaluated. But, on comparing the fairness of treatment perceived as available within the military with that perceived as available in civilian life, it appears that whites, on the whole, see civilian life as more fair, while the average for blacks is at the midpoint. Aside from the latter fairness comparison, both black and white enlisted men seem generally positive.

At this point in the analysis, we will turn from these bivariate comparisons of evaluations and race to more complex multivariate ones. The control variable to be introduced, as mentioned earlier, is an individual's career orientation or lack of it. Other analyses of these data which are not presented here have shown that: (a) higher proportions of blacks than whites at each rank level are



career-oriented, (b) the career/noncareer differences for each dimension under examination are considerably larger than the racial differences presented above, and (c) career differences exist even where there are no racial differences. It was our expectation that racial differences might be larger among noncareer soldiers than among career soldiers. In the analyses to follow, it will become clear that race operates as an important variable primarily among noncareer soldiers and that racial differences among noncareer personnel are somewhat masked in a strictly black-white comparison. Some of the racial differences shown in Figure 2 are the result of higher proportions of career-oriented soldiers among blacks than whites. However, the large degree of similarity among black and white career soldiers is also not clearly visible in the aggregate.

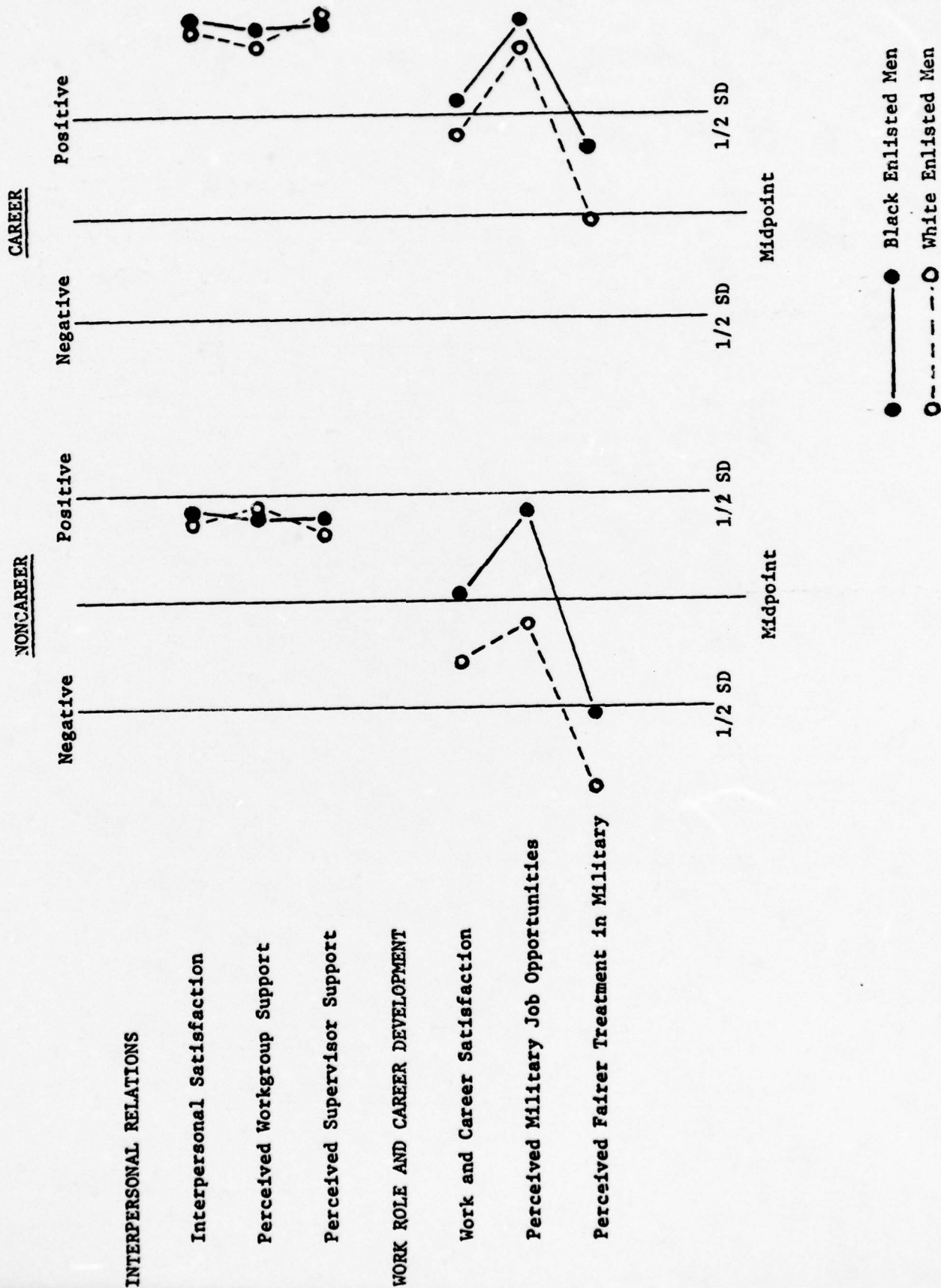
Because of this statistical interaction or specification effect, it will prove useful to present the analysis in the next section for four groups: career black enlisted men, career white enlisted men, noncareer black enlisted men and noncareer white enlisted men.

#### Interpersonal Relations

Figure 3 presents the basic findings in deviation scores and shows race to have little meaning with regard to satisfaction on the interpersonal dimensions. The differences that we do encounter in evaluations of interpersonal relations among soldiers are accounted for by the presence or absence of career orientation. One should note, however, that both career and noncareer-oriented soldiers are generally positive in an absolute sense with the mean scores of both groups clearly to the positive side of the midpoint on all

FIGURE 3

COMPARISON OF RACE AND CAREER ORIENTATION GROUPS



interpersonal measures.

### Work Role and Career Development

The analysis of the findings for the next three evaluations is much more complex. For work and career satisfaction and for perceived military job opportunities, there are no meaningful differences among career blacks and whites. However, white careerists are much less positive than blacks about the fairness of treatment they would receive in the military compared to that as a civilian. Their mean scores are very near the midpoint and indicate that the group is split on this issue.

Career blacks are more positive than the white careerists in their civil-military comparison and perceive fairer treatment in the military. Yet, both black and white careerists are considerably less positive about fair treatment than they are about their perceptions of military job opportunities.

Noncareer soldiers not only present less favorable evaluations than career soldiers, but blacks and whites show consistently large differences on each work and career aspect evaluated. Noncareer blacks are positive only in terms of their perceptions of military job opportunities, however noncareer whites are somewhat negative even there. Where noncareer blacks are split in terms of work and career satisfaction, whites are considerably more dissatisfied.

The strongest negative feelings for both groups are in terms of civil-military comparisons of fair treatment. Noncareer blacks are quite negative about this aspect, indicating that they see civilian life as more fair in its treatment of themselves. Noncareer whites,



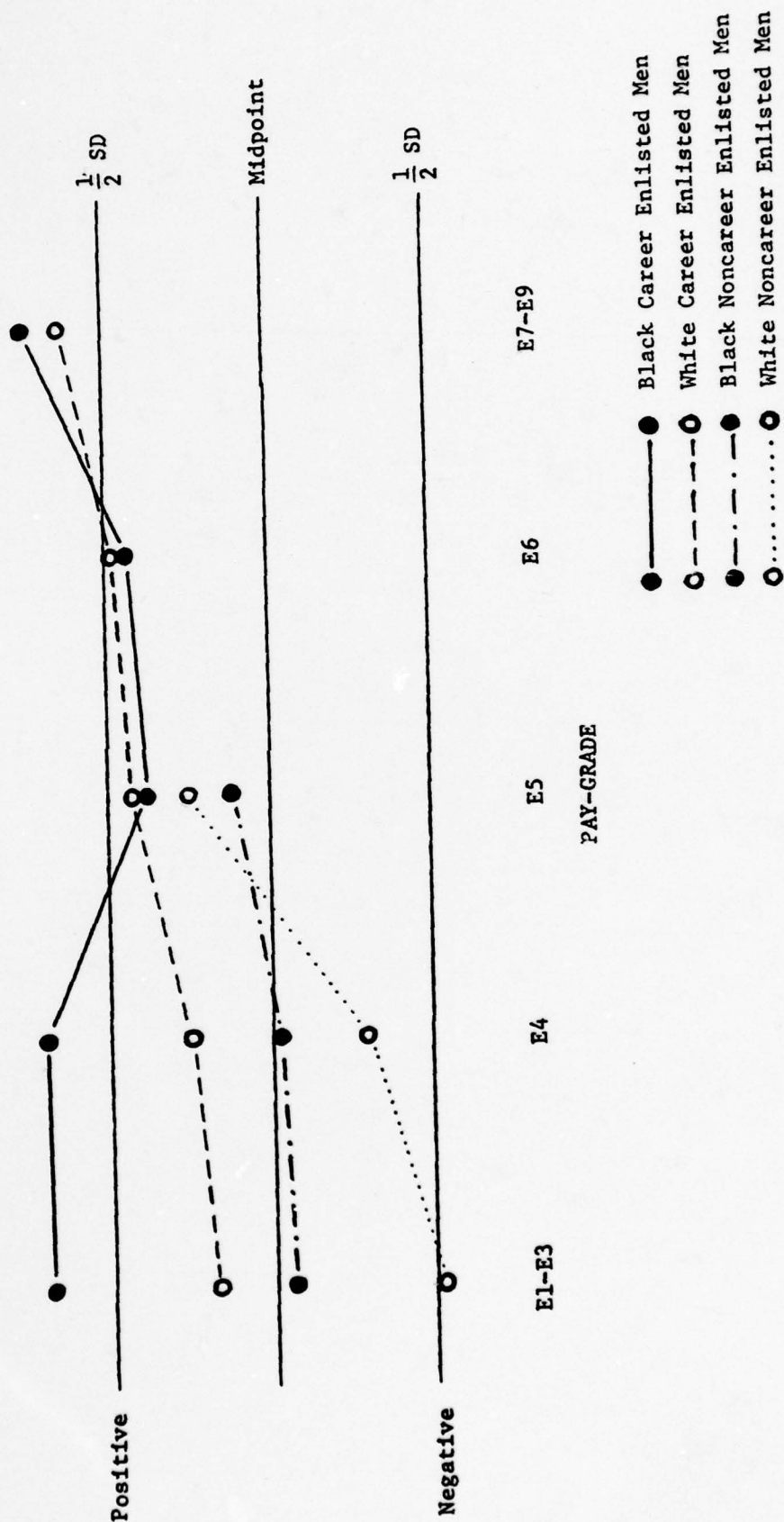
on the other hand, are even more negative on this issue and very clearly perceive the kind of treatment they receive in the military to be far less fair than they would receive as civilians.

Additional Variation by Pay Grade and Education

A generally more positive evaluation of interpersonal and career development aspects seems to be associated with soldiers' progression through the rank hierarchy as measured by pay grade. On every indicator except one, enlisted men at higher pay grades tended to provide more favorable scores than enlisted men at the initial pay grades. This trend is most clearly evidenced in the reports of white soldiers. As shown in Figure 4, white soldiers, especially those who are noncareer-oriented, clearly show an increase in satisfaction as pay grade increases. Black soldiers, on the other hand, do not show as clear a relation between pay grade and satisfaction. The satisfaction of noncareer-oriented blacks increases only slightly with pay grade. Furthermore, career blacks appear to decrease somewhat in work satisfaction at the middle NCO categories. These ambiguous patterns may be a reflection of the smaller number of blacks than whites in each pay category in our sample (the *n* varies from 20 to 78). Yet it is apparent across the indicators we have analyzed in detail but only illustrated here that blacks in their early years within the Army provide evaluations that are much more positive than held by new white soldiers. That is, black soldiers, even those who lack career orientation, seem to enter the service with a positive attitude and thus, the trend in black evaluations is one of little variance. This helps account for other research

FIGURE 4

COMPARISON OF WORK AND CAREER SATISFACTION AT EACH PAY-GRADE FOR RACE AND CAREER ORIENTATION GROUPS



findings which have shown rank to be of less importance in predicting job satisfaction among blacks than whites.<sup>32</sup>

We also divided the four career and race analysis groups on the basis of education using categories of: less than high school; high school; and more than high school. However, changes in evaluations across groups were both modest in magnitude and inconsistent in direction. Thus, no systematic interpretation will be presented. Next, we will turn to a more unusual type of analysis which we hope will reveal more of the process by which race operates to produce different conceptions and evaluations of the military work setting.

#### Racial Composition of the Military Work Setting

To conceive of race and its effects on attitudes purely as a characteristic of the individual as we have done in our analyses above ignores the important social reality that race may often be relevant only for certain social settings. In this section, we will look at the race of the soldier in the context of the race of those around him - his supervisor and his work group. If there are any consequences of racial match with one's supervisor or with the majority of one's work group, racial differences might make the evaluations more negative. Of course, such an expectation assumes elements of racial antagonism and conflict, desires for racial separatism or, at a minimum, cultural misunderstandings. These assumptions would be consistent with current literature on race relations within the military.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, we may expect that if there are attitudinal consequences of racial match, they will appear primarily in the



evaluations of interpersonal satisfaction, where the racial characteristics of respondents would be most relevant for assessments of individuals. In this light, we would expect racial match to have little impact on general work and career satisfaction. However, the possibility of such relationships was not excluded from our analysis which appears in Tables 2 and 3 and includes these indicators for comparison. These tables include only a subset of the indicators used earlier. The interpersonal satisfaction index has been broken into its two component parts - satisfaction with supervisor and satisfaction with work group.

We have also included two measures of perceived racial discrimination. The first asks the respondent to evaluate the extent of racial discrimination against himself based on his race or national origin. The second item asks about the extent of discrimination against blacks in the military. The specific wording of these two items is included in Table 1. As with interpersonal satisfaction, we may expect the racial composition of the respondent's work setting to have consequences for his perceptions of discrimination, particularly against himself.

In both Tables 2 and 3 we have presented the findings for the four analysis groups. Although in most cases the differences are not statistically significant, the findings in Table 2 show that racial match or difference between soldier and supervisor appears to primarily affect soldiers' perceptions of interpersonal satisfaction and discrimination. Of the four significant differences found in Table 2, three are among white rather than black soldiers (reflecting the larger numbers of whites than blacks in the sample), and three

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF DEVIATION SCORES FOR BLACK AND WHITE SOLDIERS WITH SAME OR DIFFERENT  
RACE SUPERVISOR CONTROLLING FOR CAREER-ORIENTATION

	<u>Career</u>				<u>Noncareer</u>			
	<u>Blacks</u>		<u>Whites</u>		<u>Blacks</u>		<u>Whites</u>	
	<u>Blk Sup</u>	<u>Wh Sup</u>	<u>Blk Sup</u>	<u>Wh Sup</u>	<u>Blk Sup</u>	<u>Wh Sup</u>	<u>Blk Sup</u>	<u>Wh Sup</u>
N:	(62)	(162)	(121)	(393)	(59)	(86)	(146)	(434)
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS								
Satisfaction with Work Group <sup>a</sup>	+ .80	+ .72	+ .64	+ .74	+ .43	+ .18	+ .34	+ .42
Satisfaction with Supervisor <sup>a</sup>	+ .70	+ .68	+ .66	+ .71	+ .54 *	+ .09	+ .16	+ .27
WORK ROLE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT								
Work and Career Satisfaction	+ .57	+ .59	.39	.49	-.04	-.05	-.53 *	-.27
Perceived Fairer Treatment in Military	+ .26	+ .47	-.06	+ .02	-.50	-.56	-1.02	-.89
DISCRIMINATION								
Against Self <sup>b</sup>	+ .69	+ .58	+1.24 *	+1.44	+ .34	+ .20	+ .82 *	+ .15
Against Blacks <sup>b</sup>	-.32	-.37	+ .84	+ .89	-.23	-.37	+ .76	+ .72

a. These are individual items used elsewhere to construct the Interpersonal Satisfaction Index.

b. Positive deviation scores reflect positive evaluations of the racial climate whereas negative scores indicate respondent's evaluation of discrimination as prevalent.

\*p>.05

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF DEVIATION SCORES FOR BLACK AND WHITE SOLDIERS WITH MAJOITY OF WORK GROUP  
SAME OR DIFFERENT RACE CONTROLLING FOR CAREER-ORIENTATION

	Career				Noncareer			
	Blacks		Whites		Blacks		Whites	
	Blk Maj	Wh Maj	Blk Maj	Wh Maj	Blk Maj	Wh Maj	Blk Maj	Wh Maj
N:	(40)	(186)	(57)	(495)	(40)	(107)	(51)	(542)
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS								
Satisfaction with Work Group <sup>a</sup>	+ .66	+ .75	+ .33 **	+ .75	+ .57	+ .25	- .02 *	+ .42
Satisfaction with Supervisor <sup>a</sup>	+ .45	+ .70	+ .47 *	+ .70	+ .30	+ .31	+ .07	+ .24
WORK ROLE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT								
Work and Career Satisfaction	+ .52	+ .57	+ .25	+ .45	- .03	+ .03	- .50	- .32
Perceived Fairer Treatment in Military	+ .30	+ .41	- .16	.00	- .76	- .53	- .97	- 1.00
DISCRIMINATION								
Against Self <sup>b</sup>	+ .64	+ .61	+ 1.02 **	+ 1.44	+ .06	+ .33	+ .40 *	+ 1.11
Against Blacks <sup>b</sup>	- .22	- .35	+ .79	+ .84	- .51	- .31	+ .48	+ .74

a. These are individual items used elsewhere to construct the Interpersonal Satisfaction Index.

b. Positive deviation scores reflect positive evaluations of the racial climate whereas negative scores indicate respondents' evaluation of discrimination as prevalent.

\*p < .05

\*\*p < .001



are among noncareer rather than career soldiers. However, there is only one instance in which racial differences between soldiers and their supervisors are associated with significantly lower satisfaction with supervisor than is the case when both are of the same race. This instance involves black noncareer soldiers with white supervisors.

One can also see the effect of a racial match between supervisor and subordinate upon the subordinates' perceptions of discrimination against themselves. There appears to be a slight tendency for soldiers to report personally felt discrimination as existing to a greater extent when their supervisor is of a different race. This tendency however, is only significant among white soldiers; white soldiers with a black supervisor are somewhat more likely to report discrimination against themselves than whites with white supervisors. Among black soldiers, the race of the supervisor seems to have little effect upon black perceptions of themselves as targets of personal discrimination. However, blacks consistently perceive racial discrimination against themselves more than white soldiers do.

Table 3 shows a similar analysis presenting the effects of racial match or difference between the respondent and the perceived racial majority of his work group. Among career soldiers, both black and white, satisfaction scores tend to be higher when a majority of the work group is white. The effects are statistically significant only among white soldiers, and only with regard to the interpersonal relations measures. There is also a significant difference among white soldiers with regard to perceived discrimination among themselves. They perceive more discrimination when they are in a

primarily black unit.

Among noncareer soldiers, the only significant differences are again among whites, with white soldiers in primarily black units being less satisfied with their work groups, and more likely to perceive discrimination aimed at themselves.

#### DISCUSSION

Our analysis has taken as its starting point the pattern of findings reported in the American Soldier research of World War II. The analyses we have presented above confirm that the underlying pattern of relationships discovered in that period are still present today. Specifically, black soldiers still report somewhat higher levels of job satisfaction than white soldiers. Blacks tend to interpret their negative experiences in terms of racial discrimination but are more likely than whites to indicate that the treatment they receive in the military is fairer than they would receive as a civilian. These findings are consistent with evidence that suggests that the Army, reflecting American society, does manifest patterns of discrimination, but that in keeping with an Army tradition of being at the forefront of equal opportunity in society, steps are rapidly being taken to correct these patterns.<sup>34</sup>

In addition we have looked at the racial context of the work setting and found that having a supervisor or the majority of one's work group of a different race has some modest consequences for levels of interpersonal satisfaction and feelings of discrimination against oneself. However, we did not find substantial evidence that interpersonal relations were generally more negatively perceived in

integrated environments or that satisfaction with the work role or career development was affected.

Based on these data, and if the pattern described continues under extended all-volunteer conditions, the consequence will probably be a slight aggregate increase in level of work and career satisfaction (but not interpersonal satisfaction) with increasing proportions of blacks in the Army. This will be true especially among noncareer soldiers but will have little effect for the career force.

One clear implication of these findings is that, to the extent one can generalize from these kinds of attitudinal data, black career soldiers seem to be highly integrated into the career enlisted force. In fact, it seems to be white noncareer soldiers who are most isolated in the All-Volunteer Army in terms of the match between what they want out of the military job and what they perceive they are getting. Even noncareer black soldiers seem to enter with more reasonable expectations of what Army life has to offer and more realistic evaluations of the alternative civilian possibilities. On the other hand, black veterans do, in actuality, gain more from military service than do white veterans. This reality may also affect noncareer soldiers' attitudes. Although blacks - career and noncareer - perceive high levels of racial discrimination against blacks as a group, relatively few report discrimination against themselves based on race. In addition, they seem to clearly see the alternatives external to the military as bad or worse in terms of fairness of treatment. Noncareer whites, on the other hand, seem quite sure that the civilian world would treat them better.

Two major aspects of the findings could be easily overlooked in the



detailed analysis of racial similarities or differences we have presented. The first is that the differences in job satisfaction between career and noncareer soldiers are of considerably more importance than are those between blacks and whites. In addition, as mentioned above, black soldiers who are career-oriented seem to be as equally well integrated into the career force as are those whites who also indicate career commitments.

These findings are of considerable importance in the discussion of the "two-force" Army. Most of those discussions have argued for differences between combat and noncombat segments of the Army.<sup>35</sup> Elsewhere we have systematically examined combat and noncombat differences and compared them with career and noncareer differences and have established that the two-force model is applicable - as far as it can be measured in terms of attitudinal differences - only to the career force versus the noncareer force.<sup>36</sup> These findings, in conjunction with those we have presented here, may argue for separate recruitment and management strategies for career and noncareer soldiers since they approach the military with different motivations and expectations.

The second aspect of this research that is necessary to put all of the rest in perspective is the civil-military comparison with which we started our analysis. Those findings by Wessner and Franklin stand in stark contrast with our general findings of quite positive levels of interpersonal satisfaction, in particular. Although career personnel were more positive than noncareer personnel, even noncareerists appeared at least somewhat more

## FOOTNOTES

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satisfied than dissatisfied interpersonally when we used deviation scores. When the entire Army sample was contrasted with civilian norms, however, soldiers appeared especially dissatisfied with their work group and supervisor. Based on the component items of the work and career satisfaction index, soldiers as a whole were quite dissatisfied in terms of their work and career development as well. Thus, one must consider that, comparing soldiers and their jobs with civilians and their jobs, blacks are perhaps not really more satisfied than whites, but simply less dissatisfied. These findings would argue that job dissatisfaction among noncareer whites poses an especially difficult management issue, and that the quality of Army work life, as it is reflected in measures of job satisfaction, remains a serious policy issue for the entire Army.



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convergent and divergent validity, the indexes were themselves also interrelated. For example, in their research Aiken and Hage reported a correlation of .75 between their interpersonal and work and career development indexes which they labeled "alienation from expressive relations" and "alienation from work." See Aiken and Hage, op. cit. In the present data, there is an inter-index correlation of .57 among black soldiers and one of .51 among whites.

26. Bachman, Blair, and Segal, op. cit.
27. Pecorella, op. cit.
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30. Taylor and Bowers, op. cit.
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32. Wilson and Butler, op. cit.; Lynch, op. cit.
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